

# **“First People of the First State”: Programs featuring the Lenapé Indian Tribe of Delaware at downtown Dover, Del. locations throughout September 2018**

**Updated: Sept. 12, 2018**

(DOVER, Del.—Aug. 21, 2018)—The [Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs](#), in partnership with the [Lenapé Indian Tribe of Delaware](#) and the [Dover Public Library](#), will be sponsoring “First People of the First State,” a series of 11 Lenapé-themed programs taking place during September 2018 at three locations in downtown Dover, Del. A full schedule is listed below. All programs are free and open to the public. For additional information, call 302-744-5054.



Lenapé fancy dancer. The Lenapé Indian Tribe of Delaware will be celebrating its heritage with dancing and demonstrations on Sept. 1, 2018.

Commenting on the Lenapé people's more than 12,000-year presence in Delaware, Nena Todd, site supervisor for the division's downtown Dover museums, noted that, "despite the struggles and hardships that they have experienced in recent centuries, the Lenapé people continue to persevere, prosper and preserve their cultural heritage—and to generously share it with their fellow Delawareans." In keeping with this tradition, the tribe has partnered with the division to

sponsor Native-American-themed programming each September since 2012.

Highlights of the 2018 “First People of the First State” series include “A Lenapé Celebration of Heritage” which will take place between 10 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 1 at [The Old State House](#) located at 25 The Green. During the day’s activities, tribal members will celebrate mother earth and their culture with dancing, demonstrations and a “grand entry” at Noon.

On Saturday, Sept. 1 and Monday, Sept. 3, the [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), located at 375 S. New St., will present “American Indian Melodies and the Victor Talking Machine Company,” a program that explores early-20th century Victor recordings of Native American music. During the program, site-interpreter Valerie Kauffman and featured guest–American Indian flutist Boe Harris–will explore what was called the “unique American sound” during the [Indianist Movement](#) of the 1880s through the 1920s. Visitors will have an opportunity to listen to some of these compositions on original 78-rpm recordings played on authentic Victor Talking Machines. In addition, Harris will perform Indian melodies and audience members will be provided with traditional instruments to play along in an impromptu “Indian melodies jam session.” Programs will take place at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on both days.



Native-American flutist  
Boe Harris will perform  
at the Johnson Victrola  
Museum on Sept. 1 and 3,  
2018.

Finally, on Friday, Sept. 21 at 6 p.m., the Dover Public Library, located at 36 Loockerman Plaza, will host “Native American Arts” in which members of the Lenapé Tribe will demonstrate drumming and dancing, and share the art of bead working.

Funding for the 2018 “First People of the First State” series is provided, in part, by a grant from the [Delaware Humanities Forum](#), a state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Administered by the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, the [five museums of the state of Delaware](#)—New Castle Court House Museum, John Dickinson Plantation, The Old State House, the Johnson Victrola Museum and the Zwaanendael Museum—tell the story of Delaware’s contributions to the history and culture of the United States. Through displays, exhibits and special programs, the museums explore how the state’s distinctive physical environment, in combination with the people who came to live there, gave Delaware an identity that is different from any other place.

*The Old State House and Johnson Victrola Museum are administered by the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, an agency of the State of Delaware. The division enhances Delaware’s quality of life by preserving the state’s unique historical heritage, fostering community stability and*

*economic vitality and providing educational programs and assistance to the general public on Delaware history and heritage. The division's diverse array of services includes operation of five museums which are [accredited by the American Alliance of Museums](#), administration of the State Historic Preservation Office, conservation of the state's archaeological and historic-objects collections, operation of a conference center and management of historic properties across the state. Primary funding for division programs and services is provided by annual appropriations from the Delaware General Assembly and grants from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, a federal agency. However, the contents and opinions expressed in the division's programs and services do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Department of the Interior.*



**"First People of the First State"  
September 2018**

**Schedule as of Aug. 21, 2018**

Free admission for all events

**Saturday, Sept. 1, 2018**

**"The First People of the First State: 'A Lenapé Celebration of Heritage.' "** Eighth annual celebration featuring the [Lenapé Indian Tribe of Delaware](#) as they honor mother earth and Native-American culture with dancing and demonstrations. [First Saturday in the First State](#) program. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Programs 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Grand entry at Noon. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

**Saturday, Sept. 1 and Monday, Sept. 3, 2018**

**"The First People of the First State: 'American Indian Melodies and the Victor Talking Machine Company.' "** Site interpreter Valerie Kauffman and American Indian flutist Boe Harris explore early-20th-century Victor Talking Machine Company recordings of compositions based on, or inspired by, Native American music, accompanied by 78-rpm recordings played on authentic Victor Talking Machines. In addition, Harris will perform Indian melodies and audience members will be provided with traditional instruments to play along in an impromptu "Indian melodies jam session." [Johnson Victrola Museum](#), 375 S. New St., Dover. Programs at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-739-3262.

**Monday, Sept. 3, 2018**

**"The First People of the First State: 'The Long Road to Recognition: New Avenues.' "** Elected Chief Dennis Coker will discuss the long process that led to the [Lenapé Indian Tribe of Delaware](#)'s official status as a state-recognized Indian community and what that means for Delaware's citizens today. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Program at 1 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

**Saturday, Sept. 8, 2018**

**"The First People of the First State: 'Archaeology in Delaware and the First People.' "** Program by John P. McCarthy, RPA, cultural preservation specialist for Delaware State Parks, provides information on archaeological sites in Delaware that have revealed stunning information about the lives of Delaware's first people. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Program at 1 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

**Saturday, Sept. 15, 2018**

**CANCELLED: "The First People of the First State: 'Deciphering American Indian DNA.' "** Program explores the implications of DNA testing from a Native American perspective. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Program at 1 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

302-744-5054. **Note: Due to Hurricane-Florence-related cancellations by panelists who would have been traveling from the Carolinas, this program has been cancelled.**

**Friday, Sept. 21, 2018**

**"The First People of the First State: 'Native American Arts.' "** Join the [Lenapé Indian Tribe of Delaware](#) as they demonstrate drumming and dancing, and share the art of bead working. Partnership between the Dover Public Library and the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. [Dover Public Library](#), 35 Loockerman Plaza, Dover. 6 p.m. 302-736-7030.

**Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018**

**"The First People of the First State: 'American Indian Women Today.' "** American Indian women, including author Kay Oxendine of the Haliwa-Saponi Tribe, will speak about traditional roles and how those roles have become pertinent in today's #MET00 society. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green, Dover. Program at 1 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m. 302-744-5054.

**Tuesday, Sept. 25, 2018**

**"The First People of the First State: 'Bloomsbury and the Survival of the Lenapé People.' "** Join archeologist and ethnographer Dr. Cara Blume as she examines the significance of the Bloomsbury archaeological site which gave proof of identity and the continued existence of the [Lenapé](#) people in Delaware. Partnership between the Dover Public Library and the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. [Dover Public Library](#), 35 Loockerman Plaza, Dover. 6 p.m. 302-736-7030.

**Saturday, Sept. 29, 2018**

**"The First People of the First State: 'Growing Up Lenapé in Delaware: Lenapé Women Speak.' "** Tribal citizens speak about their experiences with American Indian identity before and after desegregation. [The Old State House](#), 25 The Green,

Dover. Program at 1 p.m. Museum open 9 a.m.—4:30 p.m.  
302-744-5054.

**-End-**

**Contact:**

Jim Yurasek

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

Phone: 302-739-7787

E-mail: [Jim.Yurasek@delaware.gov](mailto:Jim.Yurasek@delaware.gov)

Web: <http://history.delaware.gov>